How to / Trackmania / Mediatracker / Text

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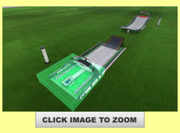
Introduction

Another rather simple, but important thing in Trackmania is the text track, that is responsible for any kind of text effects, you saw in the different driving tracks. But as we will see it offers much more than that.

Section 1: The values

Download our empty *MAC TEXT TRACK*.

Open it with the mediatracker and record a Mediatracker Ghost. Then enter the In-Game mediatracker section and add a "Text-Track". Place the trigger on the start ramp.



CLICK IMAGE TO ZOOM

Let's take a look at the different settings and values you can change. You should be familiar with the things above the "TrackText" from the Workflow and Quickguide tutorial. So let's focus on the settings below "Block End".

TrackText

Enter the text you want to use within your work here. You are able to use the color and control codes here, including multi-line texts, but excluding manialinks ! When using large texts with complicated signs, it can be useful to prepare the text in a text editor (notepad) and then copy+paste it into here.

Colour

Change the main colour of your text here. Just text that is written in Nadeo's default colour can be coloured here. Letters that are affected by color codes not!

Note1: The colour you choose here is the same at all keyframes, and can't make the colour change at other keyframes.

Note2: If you use the $s (shadow) text code, the shadow will change its colour, depending on what colour you chose in the colour picker field.

IMPORTANT
Always remember to change (or copy) necessary values at **all keyframes** of a text track.

PosX and PosY

Changes the position of the text on the screen. PosX edits the horizontal axis, PosY the vertical axis. You may enter negative and decimals as well. A value of 0.00 represents the middle, while 1.00 is the edge of the screen.

Depth

Maybe one day you will have the situation that there are two textlines in your work that cross each other. Well, this is the setting that decides "upper" one and which one "lower". Valid values are from 0.00 (up) to 1.00 (down).

Rot

Rotation of the text. For example a value of 90 here will make the text rotate 90 degrees to the left. You may enter negative values and decimals of course.

ScaleX and ScaleY

Responsible for the size of the text. As with position the X value changes the horizontal size, the Y the vertical size. Negative values will mirror Unfortunately TM will only do proper resizing to a certain size (about 10x), from then on the letters get edgy.

Opacity

Should be clear. Slider to change the opacity or transparency of the text.

I admit some things sound a bit theoretical and complicated, don't worry if you don't understand them yet, we have prepared a practical exercise for you, that will make you understand things better :-)
But before we come to the practice, something else...

Section 2: Not only a text tool

Surely you have already seen a big bar as a background for a text, technical looking lines or other fascinating stuff in the mediatracker work of your favorite author. People are asking all the time how to create such effects.
Creating text is not the only thing you can do with a text track. Lots of other stunning effects can be created with this simple tool.

Examples for "Text-Effects"

CLICK IMAGE TO ZOOM

(picture might look different due to the resizing)
These are dozens of streched "I"

CLICK IMAGE TO ZOOM

Scale two "I", place them on the right position and the result will look like this

CLICK IMAGE TO ZOOM

CLICK IMAGE TO ZOOM

These are two "I" used as a colour transition

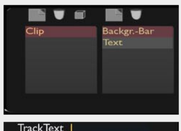
Known problems

There are a couple of problems that might happen to you when you try to create your own text effect stuff, especially when you are still beginner with the mediatracker. Fact is, that most of these problems are no bugs or errors of the game. The game is just doing what you tell it to do!
One of the most frequent problems is that the brink of a line is blurred. This happens, when a letter is streched quite heavily. Most of the time this is simply solved by adding a "I" that is streched at the Y-axis on the brink. But of course there are other solutions to fix this problem.

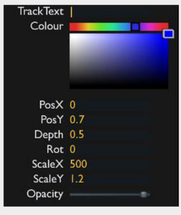
So, if you should ever be a problem with working in the Mediatracker, try to solve it yourself first, before you ask other people. Improvise! That's the best method to improve your own skills.

Exercise

Here is a short exercise for you to learn how to use your theoretical knowlegde in practice.
Our aim is to create a text, that is moving a little bit, written on a nice bar as a background.



Step 1: Creating the right tracks
Record a Mediatracker ghost, if you haven't done yet and enter the In-Game section of the mediatracker. Place the trigger on the start ramp.
As we will need one text track for the bar and another one for the text itself, you should add two text tracks. Length: 5 seconds both.



Step 2: The background bar
To create the "background bar" we will have to stretch a "I" horizontally and just a little vertically, to make the text fit perfectly on it. Play around with the positions a bit to get more familiar with the entire tool.
If you want you can take over the values from the picture left, or make your own individual bar.
Hint:
Maybe you already recognized, that your effect just appears suddenly, and then disappears rather suddenly after 5 seconds again.

Most of the time simple things can make your effects' appearance look smoother. Just add two keyframes (e.g. at second 1 and second 4 in this case) and move the opacity slider leftmost at the start- and end-keyframe.

Step 3: The main text
This shouldn't be a big problem for you now.
Place you text directly on the bar we created before. Colour it how you like it. make it move from the left to the right, or from the right to the left. Do whatever you want with it. Be creative ;-).

Perhaps, you won't see your text, when placing it "on" the bar or sometimes its visible and sometimes not.
This is because The "Depth" values of both tracks are the same. Set this value of the text lower then the one from the bar (e.g. 0.4).

Don't forget to edit this number at both (start- and end-keyframe). This will make it being "over" the bar.
If you want the text to appear and disappear smoother, use the same technique as described before. Place the keyframes parallel to the ones from the bar.

If you want to know if you did everything right, **download** our *finished MAC TEXT TRACK* and watch the result in the mediatracker.

Congratulations, you know everything about the text tool now.

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